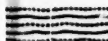


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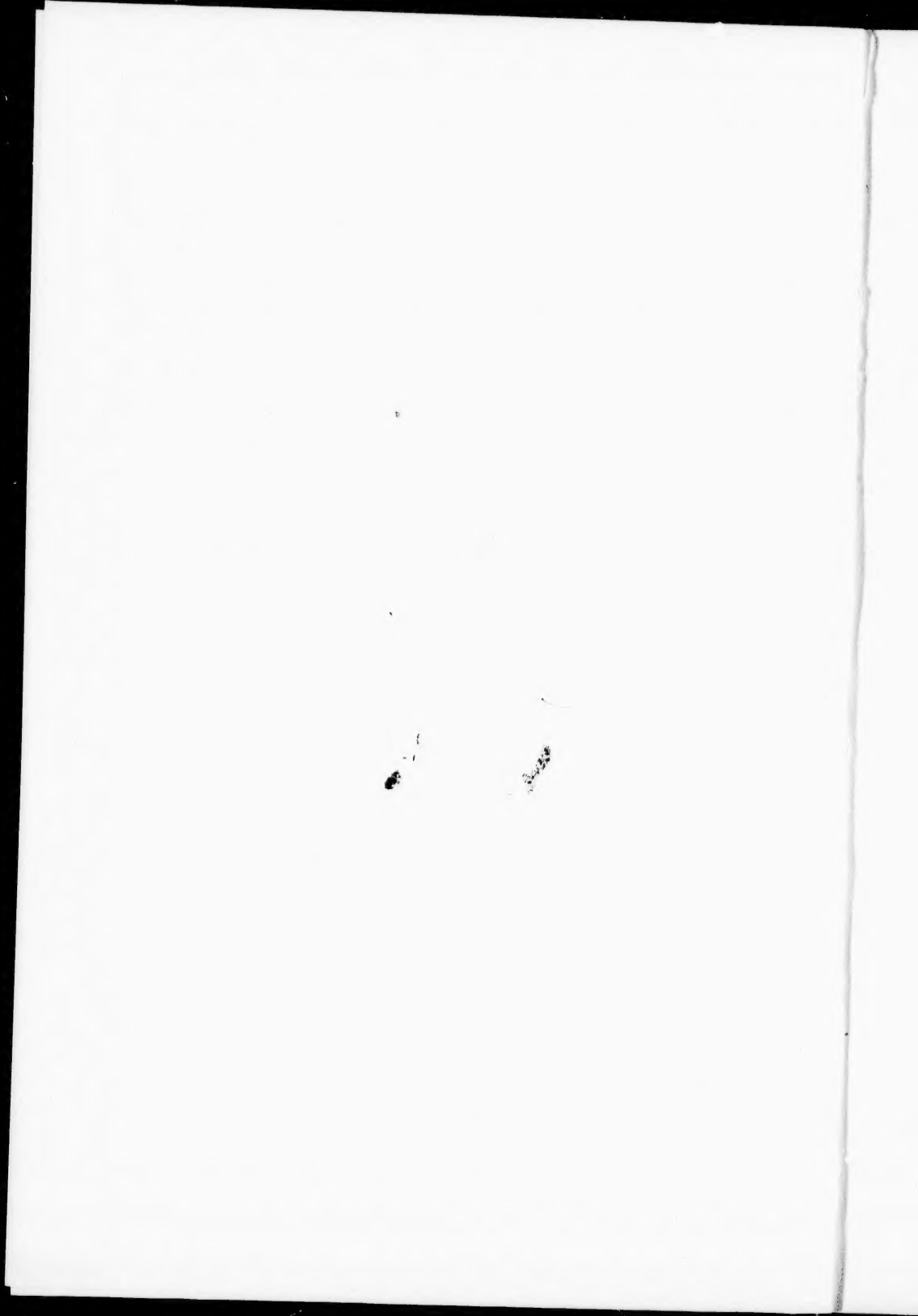
A Poem



.... BY

R. WALTER WRIGHT, B.D.

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THE DREAM OF COLUMBUS



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THE DREAM OF COLUMBUS.

PRELUDE.

THE heart hath its secrets, and so hath the sea :

The heave of the billows, the rush of the tides,
Ever-throbbing the pulses of Deity be :

The Force of a Force that forever abides.

Ah ! Deity—Force —are but names to the soul

That would pluck the gold wand from the right hand of
Force,

Would wear the famed laurel of Mystery's goal,

And talk eye to eye with the Life in its Source.

The voices from snow-crested breakers that rave,

The keen phosphor eyes that flash out in the night,

The magnetical touch of the cold, witching wave,

Are the infinite dreams of the Great Infinite.

The child-sob of ocean that longeth for sleep,

A woman's deep anguish wails out from the din,

Ambition's hoarse voice in the blasphemous sweep,

And the mixed multitudinous roarings of sin—

Iniquity's image ! 'neath darkness and slime,
And the dragon's great deluge of venomous hurt,
Are mantled the unburied records of crime :
The troubled sea casteth its mire and its dirt.

The golden age cometh, there shall be no sea !
Yet still must I sail by the unfinished chart,
And buffet the billow, and creep by the lee :
The sea hath its secrets, and so hath the heart.

I.

THE weary sun was dead, his snow-white shroud
Enfolded by a sombre pall of cloud ;
Murmured deep moans, heart-sobblings half-suppressed,
And watchers' torches flashed along the west.

Columbus marked the storm's quick pace,
As Palos-ward he fixed his face ;
His footsteps faint, his quivering lips
Muttered of Hope's complete eclipse ;
Yet, now and then, a strange fire gleamed
From his gray eyes, a fire that seemed
To outmatch the lightnings of the sky,
All death, all darkness to defy.

Diego's hand he held in his,
His only grasp on earth was this :
Kings, juntos, priests, theologies,

All sand-made ropes of policies,
All faith in man, all fancy's sweep,
Were vain as bubbles on the deep.
In the electric touch of youth
There ran some trembling trace of truth,
The eager eyes that swam in trust,
The strong-willed feet that spurned the dust,
The light curls fluttering with desire,
The cheeks aglow with boyish fire —
A boy again—a Genoese,
He caught the salt wind from the seas,
And back there rushed the Pavian dreams,
The luminous Porto Santo schemes,
The trebly-demonstrated plan,
The imperial faith in God—not man.

The rain in torrents fell, and late
They reached a monastery gate,
Half-desperate, a beggar he
Who vainly offered kings the key
To vast New Worlds, and daily sold
The Indies' crown and Ophir's gold.

O La Rabida! when are gone
Into the dense oblivion
Of fateful years, the lustrous name
Of palace—temple high in fame,
Where kings were crowned and prelates heard,

THE DREAM OF COLUMBUS.

And heroes' bones were sepulchred ;
Time, the rude chiseller ! thine shall mock,
Engraven on inviolate rock.
Thou wast the hinge upon which turned
The New World's destiny, and burned
Upon thy hearth the embers bright
Where Genius did her torch relight,
And now with ever-growing cheer
Illumines half a hemisphere.
O Juan Perez ! thy priory lamp,
A more than royal seal, shall stamp
All coming years ; its god-like print,
Old Superstition's face of flint,
Shall blanch and cower, for it hath brought
Eternal liberty to thought.

With outswelled eyes and throbbing heart,
Marchena followed o'er the chart
The wizard fingers, where there lay
The long-sought regions of Cathay.
St. Brandan like a shield outlined ;
While plain with bays and capes defined,
Antilla, Aristotle's ghost,
Appeared with bold and rocky coast.
It was the Seven-citied Land ;
There led by Heaven's propitious hand,
Seven bishops found a paradise,

Where Moorish crescents never rise,
Cipango, where all beauties blent,
The richest isle of Orient,
The nutmeg and the pepper trees
In forests vast perfume the seas
For leagues around, where sirens sing,
Dipping the wave with angel wing.
There golden palaces and towers
Rise 'midst the myrrh and balsam bowers ;
Sits clad in silk, on throne of pearl,
With jewelled amethyst and beryl,
A haloed king, whose crown displays
A thousand diamonds' dazzling blaze.
Charged with the lodestone's luring ores,
Were the ten Manillas' spicy shores,
North, where the Arctic suns hang low,
The Russ with dog-sledge skims the snow.
For ages tropic stars had shone
Upon the shadowy Prester John,
Who rules, with firm and regal sway,
Four thousand islands of Malay.
Here Mandeville his feet had set
On Tang, Ciamba, and Thebet.
Here was the kingdom of the Dawn,
Where Marco Polo once had gone--
And now with interest more intense,
Enthusiastic eloquence

Leaped from the stranger's fiery tongue,
Till silent cell and cloister rung.
Cathay, the Tartar's vast domain,
Where the great Cublai doth reign
O'er vaster realms than Charlemagne,
As King of kings, the wise grand Khan,
Who from the Pope instruction sought,
And from Jerusalem had brought
Of Christ's own lamp the holy oil,
That he might Orient devils foil.
A glorious picture then he drew
Of the great city, Cambalu ;
A square of four and twenty miles
Of temples and palatial piles,
And central crown and excellence,
The Khan's imperial residence,
Piercing the clouds beyond the sight,
A mount of gold, a flame of light.
More wondrous still was Mangi's state,
With its twelve hundred cities great ;
Magnificent, outvying all,
Was Quinsai, the capital,
Built on a thousand-island crest,
It swims on ocean's mirrored breast,
The upper and the nether sky
Midway between, it seems to lie.
City of Heaven ! from earth afar,

It shines a firmamental star.
The Spaniard's fancy, wingless, blind,
The Spaniard's language unrefined,
Has nought in words which can express
Its beauty, wealth and gorgeousness,
Richness of viands and perfumes,
The marvellous cloths of Indian looms,
The treasures of each art sublime,
Perfected from the eldest Time.
All melodies the ear rejoice,
Of bird, and lyre, and human voice.
The hoards from field, and sea, and mine,
Gathered by haughty Florentine,
The ducat treasuries, vast and dark,
Beneath the shadows of St. Mark,
The revenues of Arragon,
The spoils that all the Cæsars won,
The glory of King Solomon,
Are but as tinsel dross and clay
Beside the wonders of Cathay.
Yet chiefest charm in land so blest,
What gives to all the keenest zest,
Are women with complexion fair,
Black flashing eyes, beyond compare,
Shine as fixed stars 'mid jewels rare,
And witching smiles, and golden hair.

This climax reached, Columbus stayed
For very breath, then calmly laid
Upon his throbbing heart one hand,
The other raised as in command.
Such thoughts sublime his soul possessed,
Such will-power in his lips compressed,
Such magic in his piercing glance,
Such heaven-transfigured countenance,
Such god-like grace of attitude,
That Perez, dazed and silent, stood.
As in a prophet's ecstasy
Columbus spoke : " I am to be
The heaven-sent messenger to bring
The far-off heathen to their King.
Their amplest riches will I claim
For Christian use, in God's own name ;
The East of all its gold disgorge,
Potential weapons I shall forge,
To storm Jerusalem's citadel,
And chase the Moslem dogs to hell.
Mendoza, Spain's third king, may leer,
And Salamanca's sages jeer,
Me, as a madman, clowns may greet,
And brats shout, ' Bald head,' on the street ;
I stand upon the sacred rock
Of Micah, Joel, Habakkuk,
Of Zechariah's oracle,

Of Chebar's seer, Ezekiel,
Of Daniel, and of Malachi ;
They saw the golden ages nigh
When, as the waters o'er the sea,
God's knowledge everywhere should be ;
His grace to me the key confides
To ope the floodgates of these tides.
Isaiah, man of seraph soul,
Whose lips were touched with living coal,
Gazing adown Time's vast abyss,
Said with prophetic emphasis,
'These from the north and from the west,
The land of Sinim shall be blest.'
Oh, saw he not, through mist and dark,
The white sails of my west-bound bark ;
And saw upon the heaving prow
The humble Genoese, that now
Flies from the foolish Spaniard's state,
The bloody Jezebel of fate.
By some faith-brook of Cherith led,
Ravens shall feed me heavenly bread.
Ye worshippers of Baal, farewell !
Your low-born faith, a Moloch spell.
I give ye o'er to doubt and death.
Farewell ! ye slaves of Ashtoreth !"

O'erwhelmed was Perez as he saw
And heard, and sunk transfixed with awe

Upon a bench the wall beside,
And silent sat, eyes opened wide.
A monk came in, without surprise
He saw the prior's staring eyes ;
For so 'twas said, such watch he kept,
With unclosed eyes he always slept.
Columbus' hand, without a word,
He took (the prior never stirred),
And led him to an oaken door,
The dormitory for the poor.
By the faint taper light he saw,
On earthen floor, a bed of straw ;
Diego hours had slumbered there ;
A heavy sigh, a hasty prayer,
A silent Ave, then he crept
Into his humble couch and slept.

II.

A TROUBLED sleep ! a nightmare horror drew
Its snaky folds about his prostrate form,
And held each nerve as in a vise of iron ;
No power to move, no breath, and life itself
Seemed writhing uttermost for very life,
Yet without room to writhe ; speechless, oppressed
With horrid incubus, the weight of worlds,
He lay enwrapped in Mara's spectral arms.
His very soul was dungeoned, all that reached

It from the sensate world, a dismal wail
Reiterate, a cursed monotone
Of oft-recurrent sound, an unvoiced moan
Haunting the lone weird chambers of the soul :
A ghostly echo of the ocean's swough
On the far-distant shore. With throes intense
Of anguish longed the sleeper for release.
Help long delayed. Annihilation pressed
His iron shield upon his nostrils, gripped
In his rough fist the vital silver cord.
He wrestled with some great leviathan,
It seemed, a thousand fathoms 'neath the wave,
In utter gloom, now torn with tentacles,
Now tossed through swirling waters half a rood,
Now held to hear the monster's heart beat out
The same soul-sickening sound. "Oh, could," he
thought,
"I cast this deadly elephantine mass
Of circumambient flesh, this leaden corpse,
Aside." But like a funeral bell there tolled,
And rolled, the melancholy swimbel dire.
His thoughts seemed gangrened, scarred and scabbed his
brain ;
An infinite paroxysm rent his soul.
In utter darkness demons rushed and yelled,
Swung tantalizing just beyond his reach ;
And far above his head, instead of stars,

Shot fiery balls of blood, fierce meteors,
Whose glaring, vengeful eyes gave forth no light,
But roved as age-worn suns in the dead gloom.
Now, dizzily down the impetuous steep he slid,
To where the death's-head grows on leafless trees
By Sheol's river, where the faded flowers
Exhale miasma on the putrid air.
The stagnant stream brimmed to his helpless lips
Its nauseous draught; just o'er the goblin wave,
He saw the horrid king ride forth, full clad
In armor wrought of dead men's bones, and skulls
Were cymbals on which ghastly minstrels beat
The same infernal boom. Hope seemed to stake
Its utmost gasp on chances desperate—
When, near the horizon leagues afar, appeared
A haze of star-stuff, quickly drawing nigh,
A nebula, a comet, shapely form,
A thing of eyes and breath, he breathes—O Heaven,
How good a thing is breath! The messenger,
A woman fair! His own long-lost Felipa
He folded in his arms. "Sweet were the days,"
Said he, "when in the early moons of love
And blossomings of life, together pored
We over noble Perestrello's charts,
And dreamed of westward possibilities:
Through the dull fruitless years I still have kept
The lonely vigilance of hope. Alas!

The well-built plan may fail, the stubborn will
May yield to an unyielding power, the blight
Of destiny." "Hadst thou been true to me,
O Christopher! it might not thus have been!"
Faded from sight and touch the angel form.
"Felipa! O Felipa! Hast thou not
One word of consolation? Why to life
Restore, then as a half-drowned sailor leave
To die with hunger on a barren shore?"

"She's gone! her words, 'It might not thus have been!'
O Munnis blest, it might not thus have been!
I curse those damnèd days of dalliance,
The ground was plushy soft beneath my feet,
The atmosphere was rich with rose-breaths, flashed
Prismatic colors, music thrilled, to-night
I meet the hollow harlot all unmasked.
God, keep those phantoms back, those that have hung
About my life, and cursed its happiest days
With bleakest nights of helpless misery.
Let not the tempter touch the balance, I
A single grain 'would raise to heaven, or sink
To hell. Have I lost faith in Heaven? Nay,
But this strange life, into whose span the fates
Have forced an age of history, reels my brain,
And staggers every nerve."

He heard a song,
As if 'twere Perez singing in his dreams.

“ Had I stood at the beginning,
At the very verge of sinning,
With a firm, unfaltering hand ;
Then to wrong I ne'er had pandered,
Then Life's gold I ne'er had squandered,
Then my footsteps ne'er had wandered,
In a dark and desert land.

“ Oh, what dreams my soul have haunted,
How this restless soul hath panted,
For a love that cannot be :
For when lust the soul doth capture,
After gleams of transient rapture,
Comes the tragic final chapter,
Full of dirge and misery.”

III.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS a moment intervened—
A blaze of sunlight on Ligurian shores,
The dear old sea pranced 'neath the sailor boy,
Who rode his steed freehanded. The bright eyes
Of ocean level with his own were full
Of surging love and inspiration, while
The waves with virgin sweetness kissed his lips.

Have ye a soul, ye billows? Are the thoughts
That play upon thy wondrous countenance,
Wrinkles fortuitous of chaos, not
The free outflashings of intelligence,
Volition in its god-like sweep of strength,
Of all the untrammelled feelings of the heart,
Magnificent and subtle tracery?

Beyond the mole, Genoa the Superb
Behind, he rowed a skiff toward open sea.
Straight for the harbor makes a caravel,
Light-winged, and as Algerian pirate swift;
She flies a friendly flag, upon her prow
One figure lone, a woman seems, with hands
Outstretched; through all Columbus' frame there ran
A tremor. 'Twas Felipa's queenly form.
He sprang into the chains and to her side—
"Felipa" on his lips, when, lo, he met
An unfamiliar eye, not the dark orb
That with its sparkling wine did his young soul
Intoxicate; yet in the countenance,
And even in the eye all radiant
With light celestial, was resemblance strange:
Felipa in the metamorphosis
Of Paradise, veiled in immortal tire,
Which dimly hid the human it might be.
"I am her guardian angel," thus she spoke,

"Sent forth to guide thee ; nevermore on earth
Her spirit pure shall coalesce with thine
In sweet communion, so the sovereign laws
That rule the spirit realm for such a sin,
Divorce irrevocable have decreed.
Columbo ! know thou this. Hadst thou been true
To her, long ere this time thou should'st have reached
In blended splendors of the East and West
The goal of life's ambition, long delayed ;
But through her intercession, and the smile
Of our great Master, Jesus Christ, I'm sent
To cheer thy heart, and tell thee things to come."
Then sinking raptured at her feet, he said :

"I thought that man despised me, and God in looking down
Upon this world of sin and woe, beheld me with a frown ;
I thought all hope illusion foul, and in the murky air,
I saw but mocking spirits, and grim wizards of despair.
It seemed the earth was reeling from its God-appointed
track,
And the devil and his angels had the Truth upon the rack,
And I was but its minion base, unworthy of their ire,
A plaything, sometimes fondled, sometimes dressed in fool's
attire.
I sometimes even wondered whether Truth were truth at all,
Whether God, and Love, and Heaven, were not dreamy
shadows tall

That had fallen across the landscape of the wayward human
mind,—

And that mind itself a shadow, with but chaos, chance,
behind.

But now I see most clearly that Truth has its ebb and
flow ;

And the great ship of Heaven has this little world in tow.
Sweet spirits through the storm, if we have only ears to
hear,

Lean o'er the towering bulwarks with their messages of
cheer ;

From the Heaven-charted pathway never will the Pilot
swerve :

God is always to us better than our wretched lives deserve."

IV.

THEN swooning, knew no more, till in his dream

He woke in La Rabida's narrow cell,

Now half-illuminated by the moonlight pale,

The messenger of Heaven by his side.

These words she just had spoken to herself,

"There's power here, and restless energy,

A hero-mind whose thoughts are high, immortal,"

Which roused the sleeper. The last word he caught,

"Immortal," and again his eyes were closed,

A dream within a dream, an angel sang :

"O ye illustrious dead, whose spirits thrill
The world to-day, and to its faltering heart
Give tone and power ; in mammon-seeking mart,
And pompous court, your words are ringing still.

"Short-lived, short-sighted, oft to human mind ;
But in the wild and seething current of the brain
Ye lived a thousand lives : to die is gain,
And leave a deathless influence behind.

"Ye ever felt within, as ye climbed higher,
The upward tug of inspiration vast ;
And on ye fell, from unseen censers cast
By seraph hands, the living Genius-fire.

"Now, on the mountain top, ye clearly see
The golden chains held by the Infinite,
The priests and altar fires are full in sight :
And God and Truth are Immortality."

Once more awake in dream, the guardian chafed
His clammy brow with Heaven's restoratives.

"Why sleeping thus, O sea-enamored soul ?"

She said. "The slumbering ages of the past
For thee have waited, till thy camphor-breath
Should rouse to the rich life of latter days.
The imprisoned spirits that have knowledge loved
Yet never dared their passion to avow,

For love of knowledge in the bleary eyes
Of palsied King Tradition is tantamount
To treason, through dark years have longed to hear
Thy knock imperious at their dungeon doors.
The old, gray, childless sea, through centuries,
Has fondly searched for some colossal soul
Whom he might make his confidant and heir ;
His richest treasures, all his secrets vast,
He would reveal to thee, thou art the elect :
All weary with the solitary weight
Of empire, now he steps aside, to place
Upon thy head the crown of regency."

He gazed upon Felipa's counterpart—
The broad, smooth, noble brow, the ebon eyes
That shook the tender magnetism of the soul
With swift and myriad flashes through the air ;
The red lips all abud with truest love ;
The pointed chin ; the soft, light-crimsoned cheeks,
And all the generous wealth of golden hair ;
Tall, and with shoulders square which hid her wings,
A queenly pose of quiet dignity ;
A face all glorious with intelligence ;
A voice deep, full, an index of the soul
Within, and vocal as the nightingale's,
With sweetest, richest harmonies that thrill
And captivate the souls of men and angels.

Said she : "The sunset isles for thee are dressed
In gold and purple, and fling open wide
Their palace doors to greet thee royally.
Afar I hear the tramp of cavalcades,
The cymbals' clash, the thunderous welcome shouts
In strange and unknown tongues, yet musical.
The turbulent Atlantic wilt thou brave,
And man's base cowardice and unbelief
More perilous ? Ocean is deep and wide,
And wrestles fair with an antagonist
When he would test the ambitious nerve of man ;
But human hearts are shoals and sunken rocks ;
A devilish undertow, that would deceive
The very elect, lurks 'neath their smiling calm ;
A weedy sea where flowers bud and bloom,
But the strong swimmer in the slimy cords
Entangled, like Laocoon, expires.

"'Neath unnamed southern stars, a continent
Bathed by the equator's sea, so dreaded once,
(A sea of fire and heat insufferable,)
Warmed by the torrid sun, all wealth of plant
And tree and vine in rich luxuriance
Abounds, a veritable paradise."

And now she sang, and for the moment seemed
A mermaid throned amid the petals white

Of a gigantic water-lily—sank
And rose upon an undulating stream.

“ There oceanic rivers roll their currents proudly on,
And magic forms of beauty glisten in the blazing sun.
Midst Nature's fairest bridal scene, sweet June doth
August wed,
The orange-blossoms wither not, the feast is always
spread ;
The cassia and the lemon bow before the sovereign
palm ;
All nature halts to worship in the wondrous evening
calm.
There are the precious balsams which assuage the racks
of pain,
The tree of life whose extract soothes the restless, fevered
brain ;
They drink the cow-tree's heavenly milk beneath the
giant ferns :
The sweat-curse of the primal days the tropic genius
spurns.
Jehovah's chariot scatters wide His bounties in its track ;
The year is crowned with goodness, and the poorest have
no lack.
The virtues of a marvellous root shall all the nations
praise,
But chiefest of all blessings is the rich and golden maize ;

And chiefest of the curses, which the devil's hands have
strewn

Among the thorns and thistles, is a weed of subtle ruin,
Whose poison fumes unhinge the nerves, befog the im-
perial mind,

And blunt the noblest feelings of the noblest of mankind.
For Satan's fatal footsteps are upon these fields of light ;
The anaconda hisses from the tangled parasite,
As spirit of the waters dominates the darkling flood ;
And Curupira's clanging cry sounds from the gloomy
wood.

True, these are visions, echoes, in the terror-stricken soul,
Which drops the God-Idea in the night of sin's control ;
Yet here leaf-mantled evil hides, and meek-voiced mur-
der reigns,

The balmy breezes whisper death, and o'er the smiling
plains

Volcanoes rear their cloudy crests, and hatch their earth-
quake broods,

Where the bald black condor soareth o'er the icy soli-
tudes.

The New World has the starlight of the Indian Manitou,
Take thou, O man, the daylight of the only God and
true."

V.

THE song mysterious, broken somewhat, seemed,
But sweet, and as its echoes died away,
Columbus saw, unnoticed until now,
Crouched in the farthest corner of the cell
A form, a spirit it appeared to be,
Enswathed in half-transparent mortal flesh ;
An imperfect hybrid checked in its mid-growth ;
Of man and angel a rude mockery.
But as he gazed, it in distinctness grew,
More human in its contour, countenance,
And apparel—he described it to himself :

“A massive head, and long, black, flowing hair,
Which falls in curls upon his shoulders, where
It partly hides the huge deformity
Of a hunchback, sharp as a bended knee ;
His body shrivelled, his weak legs are drawn
Beneath him, yet his arms are long and brawn ;
His arched and ample forehead wrinkles down
On eyebrows creased in a perpetual frown ;
Incessant roll his eyes, protuberant, gray,
Piercing and cold, as of a beast of prey ;
The heraldry of stout defiance wears
His long and pointed nose, his pale cheek bears
The silent history of ambitions crossed,
Of confined plans, of battles fought and lost ;

His wide, strong mouth seems charged with eloquence,
Yet lingers there all subtle reticence ;
And on his lip a lasting curl is laid,
There Pride has feasted, and Revenge has played.
His countenance a jungle dark and deep,
Where hideous reptile shapes of passion creep ;
Where Strife and Envy, old she-tigers prowl,
And striped hyenas of Suspicion howl :
O'er all Malignity, a cloud-rack dense,
With here and there a gleam of innocence :
His aspect, weird and indescribable,
Is strange to earth, yet alien seems to hell."

The ghost-like silence and expectancy
Was broken by his harsh and high-keyed voice.
"Avast, thou silly dreamer, luckless fool !
To spend in child's play Life's most precious hours,
Building toy houses but to knock them down,
Mounted on broomstick steed, with paper crown,
Marching in triumph through a captured town.
Others, whose chances have been less than thine,
Have banqueted with Joy, the sparkling wine
Of gayest pleasure crimson on their lips ;
The blazing light from splendid chandeliers
Of human praise illumed their inmost souls ;
In the great golden hall of Wealth their names
Are powerful, spoke in reverential tones.

In the freshet of great opportunity,
 Wise men have swept adown the surging stream
 Of life, and reached the ocean of success ;
 But thou art stranded on the uplands dry.
 Be practical, old man ! Be practical !
 Do something—catch a tunny or sardine,
 Or drive an ass, if it be thyself, or hoe
 A hill of beans ; you know the maxim old,
 ‘A lazy man the devil tempts,’—then cease
 To craze thine own and others’ brains with fancies.”

Columbus, grieved and angered, answered not ;
 Turned to the guardian, who bent o’er him low,
 “Who is this wretch ?” She whispered in his ear,
 “The Evil Spirit of Genius. Never yet
 Out from the ether vault of heaven has fallen
 The pure afflatus of divinity
 On human head, which as a mitre fair,
 The true insignia indubitable,
 Proclaimed him a high priest to mediate
 ’Tween God and man, Heaven’s faintest whisperings
 To catch and pour in sin-dulled mortal ears ;
 To build new temples in the wastes, and test
 The old by the seven-eyed plummet of the Lord,
 But this accuser poured his venom forth ;
 Nor yet has God implanted in the soul
 A germinal thought of beauty or of strength,

Which promised light and help to struggling man,
But he hath sown beside it choking tares.

“This Homer pelted 'midst the morning mists
Of Time, and silenced Sappho's silver tongue,
Held the hemlock to the lips of Socrates,
Mingled with magic figures on the sand
Great Archimedes' life-blood, rich, inspired,—
Popilius, at the Formian villa door,
He nerved to cut the throat of Cicero,
Struck Virgil with delirium, and urged
With the whip of his vile tongue to feed the flames
The ripest fruitage of the Roman muse,—
Lackey of Ignorance, he oped the veins
Of laurelled Lucan, and sage Seneca,
He Dante tracked, a footpad desperate,
And made him feel more bitterly than e'er
He sang, in his own soul's experiences
Of disappointment and heart-breaking woes,
The purgatorial griefs and pangs of hell ;
And far beyond the Christian pale, he drove
To exile Avicenna, brightest star
That shone upon the deserts of the East.
He stripped, insulted, cursed Averroes,
The Spanish peer of the great Stagyrte.

“In coming years, the earth's most gifted sons
Shall fall before this half-incarnate fiend ;

By their own hands to graves untimely hurled
In utter madness ; smitten by disease
In life's young prime, within the murky tomb
The heavenly fire is quenched, or smoulders on
Beneath the sun with intermittent flame,
And hiss and snap of deep misanthropy ;
Else in some pitfall dank of vice impaled,
The radiant force of soul, which God designed
To illuminate wide spaces, is transformed
To burning lava, suffocating fumes.
Yet the Spirit suffers not the light to die ;
As on one hill-top fails the beacon fire,
He builds another in the gaze of hell
Upon a higher summit, so sweep on
The great processional stars across the face
Of Ages. Thou of this succession art,
And therefore thou art plagued with life-long woes.
Thou art a poet true, and in thee runs
The ethereal blood which courses through the veins
Of angels. Thou shalt write on virgin page,
The tablets of the everlasting sea,
With isles and continents for characters,
The immortal New World epic. Fear thou not
This envious spirit's power, nor list his jibes ;
I know him well, Cyrcano is his name."

Then hovering o'er against him, there appeared

A chubby cherub, with dark hazel eyes,
Brown silky ringlets, health-en crimsoned cheeks,
And face all wreathed in daintiest baby smiles.
She on Columbus fixed her eyes, and sang,

“ Damp not, then, my ardent spirit—
Castle-building is not crime,
If our visions have the merit
Of including more than time.

“ Many, they have lived and perished,
Dreaming dreams the same as those ;
Thoughts of greatness, that they cherished,
Turned to chaos as they rose.

“ Froth of mental perturbations,
Flowers of untimely birth,
Seemed those blighted aspirations
Flung upon the barren earth.

“ Far away, some great ideal
Loomed amid the hazy blue,
And some dreamer thought it real,
Gave his life to prove it true ;

“ And that life to human vision
Fell all fruitless into nought,
In its God-appointed mission
It enriched the soil of thought.

“As upon those islands floral,
Smiling o’er the ocean’s wave,
Where the bleak, white rocks of coral
Marked the shipwrecked sailor’s grave ;

“There the slimy wreckage drifted,
Forms of death with life combined,
And through all the sea-sand sifted,
And the sea-weeds intertwined.

“Thus accumulations thicken,
Till some palm tree strikes its root,
And the world is wonder-stricken,
As it sees the flowers and fruit :

“So the lives of men are driven
Down the roaring gulfs of time,
Till combined by wisest Heaven
In a miracle sublime.

“Truth enshrouded deep in mystery
Reaches man by fitful gleams,
And the earth’s most wondrous history
Is the record of its dreams.”

Cyrano muttered, half inaudible,
Yet his fierce undertone of bitterness
Fell clear upon a Spirit-quicken’d ear.

“ Men must believe in angels. I have swept
A thousand fantasies from their weak minds,
Of gods, and demi-gods, of nymphs and fauns,
Of genii, satyrs, and I know not what,
A mongrel breed ; and in the rabble rout,
Amid the crash of time-worn creeds, the flame
Of fated shrines, and execrations loud
O'er gods cursed, kicked, and trampled in the streets,
I hoped to drive out Shaddai and his host,
Leastwise from every brain of genius ; here
The world's great crisis-fights are won or lost.
What care I for the rank and file of men ?
They are but wild geese wedging in the wake
Of some great leader, echoes of his cry.
Yet these great minds are all too small to forge
Straight on, they needs must dizzily circle round
A centre, which they call Almighty God ;
And angels seem as kindred to their thought,
As radii to a circle, reaching out
And binding fast their minds to Central God.
Men must believe—though I have sought to teach
That faith is but a sad excrescence grown
Upon the healthful soul : as knots on staves
Are varnished o'er and prized for ornament,
As gnarls and twisted fibres in the wood
Are smoothed with deftest skill, and men rejoice
In bird's-eye grain, so this accursed faith

Is valued more than the straight growth of reason.
Faith fastens on the steep and slippery ledge,
Where all else fails, and grows till the fair ships
Of liberal thought, on adamantine rocks,
Are ground to pieces, and all wonder how.
Yet men have ne'er beheld her, murkiest dark,
Condenses into elemental light,
They say ; her pure, bright eyes, and calm, broad brow,
They see amid the faces wild and strange,
That crowd the bustling avenues of life ;
Her hand with friendly grip and manual sign,
They say, they feel and know her heavenly touch.
Faith ! silly mortals find it everywhere ;
They see it in the iridescence of stars,
And babies' eyes, and bubbles, in the song
Of birds and beetles, in the scent of flowers,
The taste of wormwood, and the prick of thorns.
The rubbish of accreted centuries
They sweep away, and on the naked floors
Of truth, they find imprinted deep her heel
Of heavenly iron, and toes of human clay.
Faith lives, and mocks me through the jealous years :
A thousand times, with cimeter of doubt,
I've cleaved her form, waited to see gush out
Her heart's blood on the thirsty sand—in vain ;
A thousand times, she seemed so slight, I've bound
Her sleeping with green withes and cordage new,

In the loom of Unbelief have woven her locks,
And pinned with stout Denial, smiled and said,
'This is no Samson'; when the Philistines
Rushed in they found but empty broken bonds.
Faith seems indigenous to man, it grows
Though no one sows, he breathes it in the air.
I run a race, I have the inside track,
And fleeter steeds. Faith drives a lumbering car;
But Truth, the cursed ally of human hearts,
Seems half-way down to meet the snail crew,
And deck with laurel spite of all desert."

Then, on Columbus turned the full, fierce flame
Of his great eyes, as furnace mouths flare out
In darkness, hissed, "Ha! Let the angels sing,
If princes scout, and wise men mock; the ground
Is full of brainless skulls, resonant once
With angels' harps and hymns, a petty dream
That pleased till strong Reality, as Want,
Or Death, knocked at the door, and asked his due;
Then the white-winged charmers, startled, fled away,
And left to woe and worms their empty dupes.
But dream thou on, Life's sun is wheeling down,
With cracking whip and speed accelerate,
The post-meridian steeps: the end is near."

Felipa's guardian said, "The end is near!

Get hence, thou mocking fiend ; angels and dreams
Shall live as long as thou, and shine as stars
Forever on thy prison bars of gloom."

Columbus sighed, "I'm weary with the fight,
The life-long fight, the dim, uncertain fight ;
The high, hot pulse of youth is mine no more,
My spirits sink, and fails desire, no more
I lightly rise when tripped by Melancholy ;
And haunting weakness, worst of all, I find
The awful, silent hollows of my heart."

"Give up and cease ! Sign a false peace !
Not till this heart forgets to beat
I'll call the signal for retreat,
With rooted feet I'll calmly meet
My destiny, whate'er it be.

"I'll meet the light on yon far height,
And sunward lift a fearless face,
Though I, alone of all my race,
Can dimly trace, through vacant space,
The prophecy of things to be.

"Sublime endeavor, I'll seek forever
In God's high school of manliness,
Where truth is a triumphant Yes,
No random guess ; I'll onward press,
Though devils rail, I cannot fail."

"Sing thus," said she. "Survey the dark domain
Of destiny, and see if Nature gives
To each irrevocable heritage
Of greatness, or the power to shape one's life,
And in the conflict here to rise at will
Or fall. Is there an iron law of fate?
Then man has power to repeal that law.
'Tis true most drift, all rudderless and wild,
The shallow creatures of mere circumstance,
They see no visions save the sights of sense,
No voices hear save such as hears the brute :
A mind is given to all, to but a few
The sense of feeling, to whose souls there runs
From every star, and mount, and wave, and flower,
A chord which brings suggestions infinite
Conceived by all. Thou'rt of the few. Go on."

He said, "I feel a throbbing in my breast
Full deeper than my heart, I will go on."

VI.

THEN, where Cyrcano late had been, appeared
A lovely boy, with hair as raven as the first,
But with a form all perfect ; and with eyes
Of wondrous brown, luring all things that fell
Beneath their charming glance ; as if the snows
Had washed it, his complexion white and pure ;

He stood in all the stately innocence
Of life's unclouded morning ; in one hand
He held a trumpet, to his lips half raised,
The other held a hammer with strong grip ;
In the high enthusiasm of youth, he seemed
As if he would inspire and forge a world.
He blew a key-note loud and clear, then sang,

“ Northward—for 'neath the northern stars, flashing heroic
fires,
Are quicker heart-beats, purer blood, superlative desires,
Great loves that look beyond the clay, volitions more
intense ;
Heaven-born ideals rouse the soul, and quicken every
sense ;
Exhaustless energies glow around the crucible of thought,
Where all the Old and all the New for seven-fold test
are brought ;
And molten truth in virgin forms to the eager eye
appears :
The miracles of science are the calendars of years.
Northward, 'mid everlasting seas of unimagined bound
And depth, lies a great continent, whose crude, unbroken
ground
Awaits the potent white-hand touch, whose alchemy
transmutes
To rich and prosperous states, the savagery of men and
brutes.

The hungry world shall turn for bread to these unmeasured roods,

Their snowy fibres clothe the Orient's naked multitudes.

The grim old mountains, that uplift cold faces to the sun,

For man their tears down wrinkled cheeks in golden rivers run.

Great lakes, like beads of crystal strung on silvery river cord,

Lie on the landscape loosely flung from the hand of Nature's Lord.

This land a mighty giant lies, his pillow Arctic snow,

While round his feet with fervent heat, the tropic currents flow.

His bones are iron, silver marrowed, blood most precious oil,

His muscles of unchallenged strength, the rich, unfailing soil,

He ravenous ate, long ages since, the forests and the ferns,

His bowels coal, his nostril-breath with fiery radiance burns,

He waits with blessings rich for men of Shem and Japhet's name

To rouse him from his stupor sleep, and hide from earth his shame.

“ Great cities rise these deserts o’er, these mighty streams
beside,
Eclipsing all the glorious piles of great Zenobia’s pride,
Old Thebes’ colossuses, the Memphian monarch’s burial
bliss,
And the Euphratean golden dream of fair Semiramis.
The richest merchant caravels here seek their favorite
home,
The world shall find its centre here as once it did in
Rome.
Swift ships sweep o’er the waters, reck not for wind or
tide,
And o’er the land fleet messengers with lightning foot
step glide ;
Then men, like gods, shall speak with men a thousand
leagues away,
All nations hail each other at the dawning of each day ;
The Lord shall His Ephphatha speak to ears that long
were dumb,
And, from the verges of the Unseen, Heaven’s melodies
shall come
To Earth’s hard-sweated labor-slave, through Learning’s
open door,
Ideas fresh and wonderful shall ooze from every pore ;
The wayward elements, baptized by Science’ priestly
hand,
Stand pledged to aid humanity ; a consecrated band,

With sapphire eyes, and limbs of steel, and heart of
living flame,

Invention, their great captain, leads to victory and fame.

“ Here Freedom shall forever wave her bright and starry
flag,

Old Tyranny in triumph at her chariot wheels shall drag ;
The wrecks of Europe’s monarchies shall stand upon this
shore,

And form a floating fortress which shall founder never-

more.

The leopard Superstition, which so many years has
craunched

The very marrow-bones of Truth, whose yell in horror
staunched

The enterprise of noblest souls, as a worm, amid the fires,
Curled, shrivels, dies, so in the light of Freedom it expires.

The dynasties of kings, abhorred—a national disgrace,
Which makes a fool or libertine the ruler of his race ;

Ten thousand grievous curses press the Old World na-
tions down,

Because all honor, right, and law are hidden ’neath a
crown ;

Man’s God-appointed ministry can never be fulfilled

On earth, till thrones are shaken down, and monarchs’
tongues are stilled ;

As monsters of primeval time in marshes rolled and
blinked,

So kings, in manhood's march, shall be a saurian race
extinct.

Here more than royal men shall rule, and more than
royal be

Their subjects, 'neath the sun of Truth, the stars of
Liberty.

A mightier republic than in Plato's vision stood,
Grander than that whose fountain source was fair Lucre-
tia's blood ;

With stronger faith, and loftier aims, with less of base
intrigue,

Than bound the Alpine Switzers in the Everlasting
League.

The hard-browed aristocracies, that with the sting and
smart

Of cruel flagellations tear the great plebeian heart,
Shall build no castle-prisons here, no tithe of blood exact,
No titled pride, all villainy shall hide with hellish tact ;
Forever in their faces pale, the fateful fact is hurled—
Democracy triumphant reigns through all the Western
World."

The music fell upon Columbus' ears,
Strong, wild, half blasphemous, yet struck a chord
Responsive, by foul-fingered Circumstance
Unstrung, but now the angel's touch restored
Its tension. Thoughts rang out which long had lain

Imprisoned in silence by credulity ;
Thoughts thrilling every man, as he is man,
Though sometimes paralyzed by long disuse ;
A part of God's own likeness, which He seals
Upon each soul He shapes, as Adam first,
Stands ineffaceable, as God is free, so man :
The charter of eternal liberty
The Omnipotent has signed, and every soul
Hears read anew, "Thou art not sullen clay,
No beast by instinct led, thou art a Man ;
The royalty of self is thine, the right
To think, to speak the thoughts that move thy heart,
To rule the earth and sea, as I the heavens ;
To doubt most sacred truths, the hoariest forms
To investigate, to delve with reason's pick
Beneath the ancient towers of Church and State,
And see if on the rock they rest—or sand ;
The right to trust the bridge of tested faith,
Which hangs suspended o'er the vast abyss
Between eternity and time, the right,
Yea, though ye see not, 'mid encircling fog,
The farther shore, yet the abutments' strength
And anchorage well proved upon this side,
With confidence, of fellowship inspired,
In the Great Engineer, to demonstrate
The hidden counterpart, and see
The cables wrapped about the throne of God."

As the prophet never hears for the first time
The awful words of God, but smite his knees
With horror, while great thoughts, too vast for man
To apprehend, as symbols, cherubim,
And dim, unshapen forms, troop through his mind ;
As lightning-eyed Incarnate Truth met Saul,
And blinded with a flash, and filled his soul
With chaos, till the Soul-Creator said,
“ Let there be light ” ; as never spirit unclean
Of despotism, a nation cursing, tears,
And causes it to gnash its teeth, and pine,
And wallow foaming, hears the words, “ Come out,”
Uttered by Freedom’s God, but yielding, strikes
Its fangs still deeper, if perchance might bear
The Almighty Exorcist a fierce reproach
For thus destroying life—so as his heart
Stood still, awed by the vastness of his thoughts,
And blinded by the flash of liberty,
The nightmare horrors seized his soul again ;
A dread sirocco, giving forth its breath
In deathful silence. His identity
Was lost, with loathing gazed he on himself,
A hideous viper, whose fang-poison mixed
With all its brain-thoughts. In a moment came
To break his bonds a beauteous little girl,
With golden ringlets falling to her waist,
In wealth of tresses, like the humulus,

That borrows from the East its saffron rays,
With tender eyes of blue, and a sweet face
Moulded in Heaven's most skilful studio,
All clad in purest white, anemones,
Cinquefoil, and lady's slippers in her hair,
Wild roses on her breast, and in her hand
She held a maple leaf, immense, fresh plucked,
In all the new-born emerald of June ;
With it she fanned the sleeper, and with voice
Sweeter than summer morn's wild chorus, sang,

“ O land of my birthright ! O home of the free !
Accept of the song that I offer to thee !
I sing of the land where the tall maple grows,
Where the Muses retreat for a summer repose,
Where the cool, sparkling streams through the wild
meadows flow,
And the strong, bracing winds set the young cheek aglow.

“ The silver and gold slumber deep in the mine,
Where the great antlered deer looketh out from the pine ;
The beaver upbuilds, by his lone forest sea,
His staunch New World Venice of true liberty ;
And humming-birds flash through the wild blossoms fair,
The ethereal breath of the Goddess of Air.

“ Great lakes where the Spirits are raptured to drink
The pure waters, reclining at ease on the brink ;

Noble rivers through limitless provinces run,
And bind with their girdles of crystal in one ;
The hoar mountain ranges, the Earth's eldest born,
In their majesty laugh the old Alpines to scorn.

“ Where forests, like oceans transfigured to green,
Roll o'er the dead bodies of tribes that have been ;
And prairies, flower spangled, as the firmament broad,
Mountain guarded, well watered, great homesteads of
God,
Stand swaying and smiling, like crowds on a pier,
Waving welcome to millions that soon will be here.

“ With white-gauntleted left hand she graspeth the pole,
The north wind is humbled beneath her control,
Her right hand distributes o'er far-spreading plains,
The sweetest of flowers, the richest of grains ;
In her health-tempered zone, which the plague-angel
shuns,
Are the fairest of daughters, the strongest of sons.

“ With the souls of the ancients, the mottoes of Now,
They reap in the fields that their fathers did plow,
They handle the truth that once lived upon trust,
And read the age-sepulchred files of the dust,
They stand on the hill-tops with far-peering eye,
And signal the swift-passing stars of the sky.

“ Religion sits singing 'neath evergreen trees
Her songs of devotion on every breeze.
And Science is talking at every hearth
Of the wonders of heaven, the treasures of earth,
While Liberty waves her bright banner on high
O'er a people the freest beneath the blue sky.

“ Here love is far richer, and home meaneth more,
And mother-songs sweeter than on other shore,
The grass groweth greener, and the night-spirit seems
To lull the tired sleeper with kindlier dreams.
O land of my birthright ! O home of the free !
Accept of the song that I offer to thee ! ”

VII.

COLUMBUS' mind was quieted—there rose,
As if from some cathedral vast, the tones
Of a great organ, mellow as if the breeze
Of midnight played ; then suddenly there rolled
Such thunder-burst of melody as shakes
The earth, and thrills with deep and wild response
The infinite diapasons of the soul.
It died away. Fronting Cyrcano's seat
Stood forth a tall, fair youth, lithe and erect ;
With high-domed brow, birthplace of massive thoughts ;
With large and pensive eyes, whose skyey blue
Suffused o'er all his handsome face

The air of holy calm ; he held a scroll
And writer's pen, angel of peace he seemed,
Yet on the demon's late-vacated place
He glanced with subtle scorn ; his lips firm clasped,
The throne of courage ; as toward the heavens
He pointed, all his eager countenance
Was lit with pent-up fires of eloquence.
He spake, as spake the prophets when their souls
Were key-boards 'neath the fingers of the All-Wise,
And their strong, full-rhythmed words fell into song.

“ Far toward the sunset glory is a higher life begun,
There the morning light is dawning, now the Orient day
is done,
And its weary nations, staggering under burdens all too
great,
Stumble headlong in the darkness down the silent steep
of fate.
There unsullied Freedom's fountain flows in everlasting
youth,
And the air bears no miasma from the swamps of blighted
truth.
Europe, old and palsy-stricken, with cold limbs and palled
desires,
Sits and mutters, half demented, by the dying ember
fires ;
Like a terror-stricken miser, crazing o'er his stolen gold ;

Like a toothless hag lamenting o'er the bridal days of
old :

Could the winds o'er graves of martyrs wildly weep
deserved lament,

O'er each strangled liberty could earth uprear a monu-
ment,

Then the din of deafening anguish would outvail the
roughest seas,

And the marbles stand as thickly as Biscayan forest
trees ;

All these lands are hacked, dishevelled, with the records
deep of crime,

And the centuries are icebergs from the slow glaciers of
time.

Clear were once the skies above her, strong her heart,
and great her hope,

And the angels thronged about her, cheering onward,
beckoning up :

High the courage that upheld her, pure the blood within
her veins,

Blazed the sun upon her banners and escutcheons free
from stains.

Loud the trumpet blew to battle, though the world the
clangor heard,

No chivalric soul responded, no heroic pulse was stirred ;

Louder, clearer, came the summons, ' From their thrones
the tyrants thrust,

Let the oligarchies perish in the ignominious dust ;
Heaven gave ye free-born spirits, and the humblest who
may wish

May with Freedom's God and Champion dip his hand in
Freedom's dish,

Let the lowest claim his franchise, at the sacred board
commune,

Be the gold and garters serviles, let the man be the
tribune.'

But their sordid souls were traitored with the coin of
princely purse,

As their weapons rusted idly, fell on them a Meroz'
curse ;

Cringing backs were deeply branded, lips were pressed
to slavery's gall,

And their abject ears were punctured with the master's
bloody awl,

Bowed their necks to superstition, sealed with their own
hands their fate ;

So the golden chances passed them, and the angels sighed,
'Too late.'

" Far toward the sunset glory, God shall plant another
race

On probation, good and evil he shall in their Eden place ;
Though through ages sorely tempted, yielding half at
times the right,

Leaders dead and lines all broken, hopeless seems at
times the fight,
And the best battalions, baffled, face to face gaze at
defeat,
Yet no lip speaks of surrender, and no bugle blows
retreat ;
So the truth is never bartered, well they stand the cycle-
test,
And the Father smiles upon them, gives the birthright
to the West :
Liberty, the conflict watching, sees the triumph from
the blue,
Cursed and driven from the Old World, finds a home
within the New.

“ Feeble are the thoughts of Europe, in her narrow walls
confined,
Swaddled in an infant's clothing, groping with an idiot's
mind ;
To the dogs of princes hath she given all manhood's
rights divine,
Cast the precious pearls of reason 'neath the feet of
priestly swine,
Lost the love that lives in spirit, lost the faith that
counts its worth,
Finds her most admired exemplars in the creeping things
of earth,

Sleeping heavily, like Eli, deaf to words from Heaven
sent,

While his sons, with lust and lucre, sully Shiloh's sacred
tent.

How all human ears shall tingle at the fearful vengeance
stroke,

When God's covenant ark is captured, and the necks of
rulers broke ;

Earth shall turn where youthful Samuel doth in humble
reverence bow,

Lists Jehovah's call, and answers, 'Speak, Thy servant
heareth now.'

Masterful sublime conceptions, thoughts of God's original,
Sweeping down like newborn spirits from their homes
celestial,

Live and rule and bless the people, not as kings of
doubtful line,

But as consuls freely chosen for the virtues they enshrine.

" Learning builds her palace temples, lordlier than Athe-
nian fanes ;

Where with loftier ambition, purer hearts, more fertile
brains,

Are the New World children nourished on the finest
wheat of time,

Stand they on the dizzy summits Orient sages failed to
climb.

Science draws full inspiration from the new-found forms
of life,
Cuts the page of unread history with the Indian's flinty
knife ;
Bending heavens, illimitable, seem to bring their marvels
near,
Newborn stars are daily smiling through the purer at-
mosphere ;
Silent men, with Thought's true sorcery, wildest ele-
ments shall tame,
Dive beneath the deepest oceans, dip their pens in primal
flame,
And retrace the fading letters of the ancient Cosmos-
scroll,
Write on manuscripts of ether the new language of the
soul.
Poets, here, the richest songsters of Great Nature's
truest art,
Shall be spokesmen for the feelings that come gushing
from the heart ;
Thoughts original and lofty, high above Olympus soar,
Yet the learned and unlearned oft have felt them all
before ;
For the farmer in his plowing, in the sweat of harvest
toil,
Has inhaled those thoughts sublimest, breathing from
the mother soil ;

And the poor man in his cabin, with his sick child on
his knees,
Has felt all his soul aquiver with the poet's sympathies ;
When expressed in higher language, sung without dis-
cordant note,
They shall see their thoughts translated, and on waves
of rapture float :
Not the crimes of gods and heroes, not the tales of lust-
ful love,
Not a hate that scorns the human, these inspired pens
shall move ;
Not the dilettante ditties that enwreath romantic scents,
Or the kingly leper robe in Flattery's lying blandish-
ments ;
But sublimer, sweeter topics, that shall thrill men every-
where,
Flash the light o'er darkened spirits, ease the loads the
poorest bear,
Hail with hope the common toiler, who the common
earth must tramp,
Carry sunlight to the miner in his grave of dust and damp,
Ring high up ambition's mountains, o'er the glacier's
ghostly glare,
Bring their oxygen to climbers fainting in the thinner air :
These with all the nobler longings of the soul shall
intertwine,
Form a ladder from the lowest to the highest and divine.

“Slavery even there shall enter, from its slimy Eastern
haunts,

Rear its viper head, and proudly fling in Freedom’s face
its taunts,

Clothe its scaly form in purple, claim a right on earth
to be

With the sons of God acknowledged, ’neath the flags of
Liberty.

There Intemperance’ bloody vultures build on Custom’s
craggs their nests,

Swoop upon the lambs, and drive their talons in the
quivering breasts,

From their fastness steep and cloudy they in deep
defiance gaze,

Laugh to scorn the bow and arrow, and the musket’s
helpless blaze.

Ah, these demons, long and fiercely have they ruled the
upper air,

And their challenges unanswered seem the mockery of
despair ;

Mothers’ hearts are crushed and bleeding, mothers’ prayers
seem all in vain,

As the darlings from their bosoms stolen are, and strip-
ped, and slain ;

All the world is red with slaughter, every home its first-
born dead,

Still the monsters’ hearts are hardened, still on human
woes are fed.

“On the broad plains of the New World first they meet a
stalwart foe,
Who, endued with keenest wisdom, all their weaknesses
shall know.
Vice and Virtue there shall wrestle in a final, fateful fight,
Clash in Earth's great Armageddon, all its darkness, all
its light,
All reserves accumulated by long ages for each side,
All the perfected munitions, which the future shall pro-
vide,
All the hate of hellish triumph, which a demon's heart
can fill,
All the inspiration hopeful, which a holy soul can thrill.
Not a day as once decided Persian fate at Marathon,
Not a night as died Belshazzar 'midst the flames of
Babylon,
But through years of changeful conflict drags the fierce
and fell campaign ;
Some are days when Truth is victor, some are days of
Evil's gain,
Days when God's own White Cross banner, reeling
downward, borne aback,
Almost captured by the foeman from the hands that
valor lack—
Days when Satan's hosts are routed, panic-stricken in
retreat,
And the armies of Jehovah chase them with triumphant
feet.

“God shall raise up valiant leaders, men who fear no
mortal frown,
Cursed as Paul and Silas were for turning this world
upside down ;
Men of culture, aye, and conscience, stirred their spirits
are within,
As they walk amidst the idols in the capitals of sin.
What to them the gods, the glory, of the modern Par-
thenon,
If beneath them hearts benighted see no glimmer of the
dawn,
If Corruption’s poison ivy twine round works of art
sublime,
And if Virtue’s snowy lilies are decoys to pits of slime ?
As the light abhors the darkness, as Jehovah sin abhors,
Speak true hearts of holy anger, earth’s supremest
orators ;
Common sense with genius mingled, strength all beauty
undergirds,
Fire from heaven interwoven in a web of silver words,
Stern their challenge to the nations, stripping festering
ulcers bare,
Shaking down untimely fruitage, pouring vials in the air ;
These as mighty howitzers shall thunder with their
voices strong,
Hurl the deadly, damning Truth into the great Redans
of Wrong ;

Stronger knights than ever wrestled for the plains of
asphodel
They shall snatch the bleeding captives from the bellow-
ing gates of hell ;
They shall lead them forth in triumph, 'midst the
demons' gnashing teeth,
While sarcastic, wrecked Rephaim welcome fallen stars
beneath—
This the World's great Coliseum, where beneath the
Æon's ken,
On the sands of Time's arena fight wild beasts of lust
with men ;
And the Christian gladiator shall outmatch the lion's
rage,
Cleave the heartstrings of the tiger leaping from his
hunger-cage ;
Heaven and earth shall hail them victors, shower upon
them rich reward ;
Souls chivalric, humble, say they, ' Not to us, but Christ
the Lord
Give the praise. He stood beside us when all mortal
might was spent,
He was skill, and nerve, and muscle, He was strength
omnipotent :
Never joyous acclamation rang such universal peal,
As when all behold that Satan's head is 'neath Messiah's
heel.'

“ Here the Church, an ark long driven, carrying in its
throbbing breast

All the life-germs of the future, finds an Ararat of rest ;
And the dove with leaf of olive, shows that not from
heights alone

Where the great man sits in purple, have the deluge
waters flown ;

But from valleys long o’er-covered with the murky waves
of gloom,

There the foliage is freshest, and the choicest flowers
bloom.

’Neath a rainbow arch of promise, from this centre shall
begin

A new race of fruitful Christians, who the earth for
God shall win ;

Peace shall rule, but highest Justice shall with Truth
and Love conspire,

At the hand of each man’s brother shall the blood of
man require.

As Augustine taught the Britons helpless idols to abhor,
As great Boniface in Hesse smote the sacred oak of Thor,
Missionary spirits mighty shall go forth from all these
lands,

Christ the Life within their bosoms, Christ the Truth
within their hands ;

And the Life shall live though martyrs’ blood shall dye
the ungrateful ground,

And the Truth shall tell its story though the tongue in
death is bound ;
And the Church, so long lethargic in the mummy-clothes
of form,
Shall arise in ancient power pagan citadels to storm ;
All earth's idols shall be shattered, all earth's millions
shall be free,
And the world be all a New World in God's coming
jubilee."

Ending his song, the singer passed from sight.
The guardian angel came, with sweetest smile,
And her supernal charms ; a single kiss
Pressed on his lips, a single word, "Adieu,"
And she swept through the wall of solid stone.

VIII.

UPON Columbus' soul a calm unutterable
Then fell—a calm whose very tension knocks
With strong hand at the trouble-wonted door ;
Now half awake, confusion reigned once more ;
Sometimes, he felt beneath his feet the ground
Of solid reason, but each rushing wave,
Uplifting in its buoyant arms, baptized
Him with the spray of dreams ; clear thought sprang up
Toward heaven, a tree branch strong, but soon was lost

Amid the quivering foliage of errant fancy ;
Then, as if smitten by an autumn wind,
The leaves fell shimmering down, and consciousness
Held up on high her bare triumphant arm.

A bell low-tinkling, sweet, and far away,
Amid the mountains of Thebet it seemed,
As if some wether lone was wandering down
A deep ravine ; then came a clearer sound,
As of the sleigh bells of the frosty north,
Sharp and resonant o'er the silent snow ;
Then beat a gong in deep and minor strain
Among the mangroves on Ciamba's shore ;
And as its echoes died came, strong and full,
The peal of a great Mangian bell, entowered
Above a sacred shrine ; it woke the Isles
And Continents, resounded all Cathay,
Cipango answered with her jubilant shouts,
Angiva, Thilis, and Canaia, all
The myriad archipelagoes of the East,
Each isle and shore with its peculiar note
From north, where falcons white wheel round the pole,
To Java Minor, and those southern lands
Circled with mystery absolute, all joined
In one great chorus most magnificent.
He listened rapt in highest ecstasy ;
Then as storm-clouds which long have shadowed o'er

The earth, with strong outline from north to south
Lift clear away their concave lid of gloom,
And leave behind azure immaculate ;
So now, but in one moment, swept away
All sleep and dreams—Columbus was awake—
And loud there rang Rabida's bells, and sang
The minstrel monks their sweetest matin hymn—
'Twas Easter morn.

“ Hushed is the voice of scorn,
Anew the world is born,
Sweet morn ! sweet morn !

“ Sing songs so loud and clear,
That all the world must hear
Their notes of cheer.

“ 'Tis man's most wondrous theme,
'Tis Heaven's grandest scheme,
'Tis God's own dream.

“ White angels of surprise
Whisper from morning skies,
Arise ! Arise !

“ 'Neath the lightning countenance,
Sleep men of sword and lance,
In heavy trance,

THE DREAM OF COLUMBUS.

" Broken the sceptic's seal,
Backward the devils reel,
The nations kneel.

" Christ bids the Old, Adieu,
Christ lives the Ever-New,
Faithful, and True.

" Hushed is the voice of scorn,
Anew the world is born,
Sweet morn ! sweet morn !"

